

Guadalupe is a young community; 81% of houses were built in the past 20 years.
but

Guadalupe is a young community, and 81% of houses were built in the past 20 years.

Semicolons are also used to separate items in a series if internal punctuation is present.

Exclusion criteria included tobacco use; history of asthma, COPD, or lung cancer;
pregnancy or intent to become pregnant; and inability to give informed consent.

Virgules

Use of a virgule implies duality.

The physician/patient experience implies that the physician and patient are one and the same.

The physician–patient relationship implies 2 different persons.

Correct: HIV/TB co-infection (because they equally describe the co-infection)

Avoid: HIV/AIDS (because they are not the same)

He or she, not he/she

Father and son bowling league, not father/son bowling league

Avoid and/or; most of the time simply *and* or *or* is appropriate.

Medical Journal Style Preferences

Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Initialisms

An abbreviation is a truncated word; an acronym is made up of parts of the phrase it stands for and is pronounced as a word (ELISA, AIDS, GABA); an initialism is an acronym that is pronounced as individual letters (DNA, RT-PCR). For the purposes of this section, “abbreviation” will refer to all of these.

Avoid excessive abbreviations. Use standard abbreviations only; do not make up abbreviations. Spell out on first mention and use only if it occurs a substantial number of times (subject to editorial discretion).

Use STI for sexually transmitted infection but not for soft tissue infection (SSTI okay for skin and soft tissue infection).

Avoid SOB (shortness of breath, sulfur-oxidizing bacteria), if possible.

Do not introduce an abbreviation in a heading. They can, however, be used in a heading if previously established.

Abbreviations should be written out in Affiliations and Acknowledgments (unless abbreviated in text). Affiliations may be abbreviated at the author’s discretion in the Address for Correspondence.

When writing out affiliations, use the official spelling, which may or may not be American spelling. Words to look for are Programme vs. Program, Centre vs. Center, Organisation vs. Organization.

WHO, World Health Organization

OIE, World Organisation for Animal Health

SI units used with a numeral are never spelled out. The following are used without spelling out on first mention (list not comprehensive).

AM, PM (time; small caps, no periods)

AMP, ADP, ATP

AIDS

BCG (but at first mention specify *Mycobacterium bovis* BCG)

BLAST

bp, kb, kbp (when used with a numeral, but spell out when not used with a numeral)

CFU, PFU

CSIRO

DNA, RNA, cDNA, mRNA, tRNA, or rDNA (*Note*: c, complimentary; m, messenger; t, transfer; r, ribosomal)

dNTPs (deoxynucleotide triphosphates)

ELISA, PCR

EDTA

HEPA filter

HEPES buffer

ICD

IU, U

M, F (in tables and figures only; write out male and female in text)

MDCK

MIC, MIC₅₀

N (concentration)

Pers. comm., unpub. data

ppb, ppm, ppt

rpm

SD, SE, SEM

sp., spp., sp. nov (with organism name), subsp. (preferred over ssp.)

Tris

UV

vol/vol, wt/vol, wt/wt

In instances when an abbreviation has become the de facto name, spelling out may cause confusion, particularly if the term appears only once. In these instances, write the abbreviation then spell out in parentheses, even if it appears only once in the article. On subsequent occurrences, use the abbreviation.

VDRL (Venereal Disease Research Laboratory) test

The article “a” or “an” should match the sound of the abbreviation or acronym, not the word for which it stands.

EID Editorial Style Guide

an HMO report, a MRSA infection (usually pronounced Mersa), a NICU (usually pronounced nick-you]

However, articles are often omitted in front of abbreviations.

CDC, not the CDC

Abbreviate the following in tables, figures, and in the Methods section of research articles. Exception: Write out in research articles if not preceded by number or if used alone; i.e., not part of a “recipe.”

days	d
weeks	wk
months	mo
seconds	s
minutes	min
years	y

If CLSI is used in a reference name, then “formerly NCCLS” is not needed. But if the reference has only NCCLS, then add “CLSI (formerly NCCLS).”

Abbreviate Street when part of address, with no period.

265 Peachtree St, Atlanta, GA

Abbreviate Saint, with period.

St. Louis encephalitis

Abbreviate UK and USA when used as part of an address, e.g., affiliations and address for correspondence.

Define ICD code revisions as follows:

International Code of Diseases, 10th revision (ICD-10)

Use a capital H for human virus abbreviations, unless otherwise directed by author or precedent, e.g., HMPV, not hMPV.

Geographic Designations

Use the preferred English spelling indicated in Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names (http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/tgn/index.html).

Spell out names of states and US territories and possessions when they stand alone or follow a county name. Use postal abbreviations in references, addresses, or product identification.